

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A cardioprotective composition ~~characterized in that it comprises~~ comprising a therapeutically effective amount of a mixture of pyruvate, at least one antioxidant, at least one lipid and ceruloplasmin [and/or] or a functional derivative thereof[[.]] , wherein said pyruvate, antioxidant, lipid and ceruloplasmin are present in such an amount as to have a synergistic cardioproactive effect on cardiac cells.

2. (cancelled)

3. (currently amended) The cardioprotective composition of claim 1, wherein said at least one lipid consists of at least one fatty acid selected from the group consisting of monoglycerides, diglycerides, triglycerides[[.]] and free fatty acids[[.]] and mixtures thereof.

4. (currently amended) The cardioprotective composition of claim ~~3~~ 1, wherein said at least one ~~fatty acid~~ lipid consists of a mixture of saturated and unsaturated fatty acids.

5. (original) The cardioprotective composition of claim 4, wherein said fatty acids are present in an amount varying from about 0.001% v/v to about 1% v/v, by weight of the cardioprotective composition.

6. (original) The cardioprotective composition of claim 1 wherein ceruloplasmin or its functional derivative is purified from blood using an one-step affinity chromatography on aminoethyl-agarose.

7. (currently amended) The cardioprotective composition of claim 1, wherein ceruloplasmin or its functional derivative is present ~~in an~~ in an amount varying from about 0.05 μ M to about 10 μ M.

8. (currently amended) The cardioprotective composition of claim 1, wherein said pyruvate is selected from the group consisting of pyruvic acid[[,]] and pharmaceutically acceptable salts of pyruvic acid, prodrugs of pyruvic acid, and mixtures thereof.

9. (currently amended) The cardioprotective composition of claim 1, wherein said pyruvate is present in said composition in an amount varying from about 0.01 mM to about 100 mM.

10. (original) The cardioprotective composition of claim 1, wherein said at least one antioxidant is selected from lipid-soluble antioxidants.

11. (currently amended) The cardioprotective composition of claim 1, wherein said at least one antioxidant is selected from the group consisting of Vitamin A, carotene, Vitamin E[[,]] and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof[[,]] ~~and mixtures thereof.~~

12. (original) The cardioprotective composition of claim 1, wherein said at least one antioxidant is selected from the group consisting of Vitamin E, Vitamin E acetate and analogues of Vitamin E.

13. (original) The cardioprotective composition of claim 1, wherein said at least one antioxidant is present in an amount varying from about 0.01 unit/ml to about 10 unit/ml of said composition.

14. (currently amended) The cardioprotective composition of claim 1, ~~wherein it~~ further ~~comprises~~ comprising an agent selected from the group consisting of metal chelators, metal scavengers, proteinic metal chelators, proteinic scavengers, preserving agents, solubilizing agents, stabilizing agents, wetting agents, emulsifiers, salts, buffers and coating agents.

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